

Remarks/Arguments

In the July 19, 2005 office action, claims 1, 2 and 10 were rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 939,068 to McGrath, in view of US Patent No. 4,970,852 to Check et al. Claims 1-7, 10-13, 15 and 17-22 were rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Check et al in view of US Patent No. 6,637,081 to Kulkaski. Claims 8-9 and 14 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims.

In response to the office action, applicant amends claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18 and 22.

Claim 1 is amended to specify a reinforcing rod that extends laterally across the lower panel. Claim 1 is patentable over McGrath and Check et al. McGrath fails to disclose a reinforcing rod that extends laterally across the lower panel of a grass catcher. McGrath's bottom member 5 is a sheet metal panel, not a reinforcing rod. McGrath's wires 9 do not extend across the lower panel. Instead, the wires 9 on each side of the grass catcher are "bent downwardly, as shown at 10, and, near the front lower corners of the catcher, said wire is bent outwardly at substantially right angles, as shown at 11..." See McGrath at page 1, lines 79-82. Check et al also fails to disclose a reinforcing rod that extends laterally across the lower panel of a grass catcher.

Claim 1 also is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski. Check et al and Kulkaski fail to disclose a reinforcing rod that extends laterally across the lower panel of a grass catcher. Kulkaski's hollow ball 5 is not a reinforcing rod. Instead, it provides a seal. Kulkaski describes the hollow ball as a flexible plastic material that is compressed by a spring-loaded door when a grass bag is used. See Kulkaski at column 1, lines 31-39, and column 2, lines 42-50. Additionally, Kulkaski's elongated member or clip 8 is not a retaining structure integrally formed with the lower panel adjacent the opening, and does not firmly grip and restrain a reinforcing rod.

Claim 2 is patentable over McGrath and Check et al, or Check et al and Kulkaski, for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a reinforcing rod that is generally cylindrical.

Claim 3 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show at least three retaining structures formed integrally with the lower panel adjacent the opening.

Claim 4 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a retaining structure that is a channel.

Claim 5 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a retaining structure that is a passage.

Claim 6 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a retaining structure that is an offset structure.

Claim 7 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show at least some of a reinforcing rod is at least partially exposed facing upwardly.

Claim 8 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a reinforcing rod that is metal.

Claim 9 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show at least one access hole in a side panel through which the reinforcing rod is inserted.

Claim 10 is patentable over McGrath and Check et al, or Check et al and Kulkaski, for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 11 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, the cited references fail to show internal dimensions of the at least one retaining structure that are not larger than the outer cross sectional dimension of a reinforcing rod.

Claim 12 is amended to specify a reinforcing rod extending laterally across at least a portion of the lower panel near the elevated lip. Claim 12 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski. Check et al and Kulkaski fail to disclose a reinforcing rod that extends laterally across at least a portion of a lower panel near an elevated lip. Kulkaski's hollow ball 5 is not a reinforcing rod. Instead, it provides a seal. Kulkaski describes the hollow ball as a flexible plastic material that is compressed by a spring-

loaded door when a grass bag is used. See Kulkaski at column 1, lines 31-39, and column 2, lines 42-50. Additionally, Kulkaski's elongated member or clip 8 is not a plastic retaining structure integrally formed with a box-shaped molded plastic grass catcher through which a reinforcing rod may be press fitted.

Claim 13 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 12. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a pair of opposing side panels on each side of a one-piece box-shaped plastic grass catcher, and an access hole through at least one of the opposing side panels through which a reinforcing rod may be inserted.

Claim 14 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 12. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a reinforcing rod that is a cylindrical metal rod.

Claim 15 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 12. Additionally, the cited references fail to show at least one plastic retaining structure is an offset structure.

Claim 17 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 12. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a reinforcing rod having a length less than the span between the pair of opposing side panels.

Claim 18 is amended to specify a reinforcing rod extending laterally across at least a portion of the lower lip. Claim 18 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski. Check et al and Kulkaski fail to disclose a reinforcing rod that extends laterally across at least a portion of the lower lip. Kulkaski's hollow ball 5 is not a reinforcing rod. Instead, it provides a seal. Kulkaski describes the hollow ball as a flexible plastic material that is compressed by a spring-loaded door when a grass bag is used. See Kulkaski at column 1, lines 31-39, and column 2, lines 42-50. Additionally, Kulkaski's elongated member or clip 8 is not a retaining structure formed integrally with the lower lip and is not the only structure gripping a reinforcing rod in place.

Claim 19 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 18. Additionally, the cited references fail to show a plastic box-like structure having walls with substantially uniform thickness, each of the integral retaining structures having substantially the same thickness as the walls.

Claim 21 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same

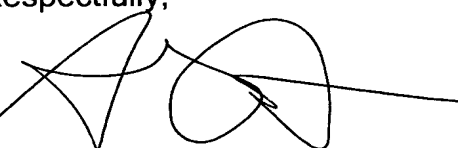
reasons as claim 18.

Claim 22 is patentable over Check et al and Kulkaski for at least the same reasons as claim 18. Additionally, the cited references fail to show integral retaining structures that have an internal dimension, and a reinforcing rod having an outer cross sectional dimension no smaller than the internal dimension of the integral retaining structures.

In conclusion, it is believed that claims 1 - 15, 17 - 19, and 21-22 are in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully,



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